Visit of former Prime Minister to Nepal

2218. SHRI SIMON MARANDI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the former Prime Minister visited Nepal during February, 1991;

(b) if so, the outcome of the talks held by him with the Nepalese leaders on bilateral issues;

(c) whether any agreement was also signed between the two countries during the visit; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The talks between the Prime Minister of India and the Nepalese leaders covered various bilateral, regional and internatonal issues of interest to the two countries. Several important steps were agreed upon for intensifying mutual beneficial bilateral cooperation. A High Level Task Force was established to prepare a comprehensive programme of bilateral economic cooperation. In the field of water resources, it was agreed that detailed consultations would be held on the major projects—Kosi, Karnali & Pancheshwar—culminating in a full review by the Indo-Nepal Sub Commission on Water Resources in April, 1991. India agreed to extend the facilities at the Indian-aided project, the Bir Hospital in Kathmandu, from 300 to 500 beds. We also agreed to open three more border points for transit for third country nationals, as desired by Nepal. Action has already been taken to implement all these decisions.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Development of Orchards

2219. SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the incentives given to small farmers for the development of orchards;

(b) whether the Government propose to relax the ceiling on holdings of orchards owned by rich growers;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) The Government of India are implementing a Central Sector Scheme for the Integrated Development of Horticulture under which inputs such as fruit saplings, fertilisers and pesticides are provided at subsidised rates. The State Governments have been specifically advised to identify small and marginal farmers while implementing the scheme. The State Governments have their own schemes for supply of inputs at subsidised rates, the rates of which vary from State to State and crop to crop. Technical guidance is also provided.

(b) to (d) Land is a State subject and laws imposing ceiling on land holdings are state laws. Role of Government of India is advisory. Guidelines are issued from time to time to the States regarding different aspects of ceiling legislation and land reforms. There is no proposal under consideration at present for relaxing the ceiling on holdings of orchards by rich growers.

Construction of Ram Temple at Ayodhya

2220. SHRI KAMLA MISHRA MADHUKAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Vishva Hindu Parishad has decided November 18,